

Storm Wreaks Havoc on Shoreline

By DANIEL DI CENSO

For East Pine Road resident Larry Dullea the water came in from everywhere.

"It was two feet deep in the yards," Dullea said of the Nor'easter that struck the Duxbury shoreline last week. "It came in from the trap door in the chimney and poured into the running furnace."

Still, Dullea feels more fortunate this time than in the past.

"We're lucky here compared to how it's been in the past. There wasn't a lot of property damage here. Up north on Ocean Road there was more. The 'No Name' was horrific, but once you go two miles away you don't even know that this storm was here."

Spring has finally arrived and the Nor'easters have apparently ceased, but not without leaving a mark for many residents in Duxbury. The shoreline remains covered with rocks from the ocean and many homes have been left with substantial damage. The Duxbury Beach Reservation, which has begun doing some emergency work in the area, has estimated through its Operations and Technical Committee that the total cost of the damage ranges from \$450,000 to \$500,000.

"An event like this is not totally unexpected," said Margaret Kearney, president of the Duxbury Beach Reservation. "That is why we work very hard not only to be prepared but also to raise funds for the storm damage."

Endangered Species Officer Michael Pforr agreed. "[The damage] was pretty significant, but it could have been a lot worse. It was just as bad a few years ago when we had two Nor'easters. Every year we see winter storms that do a lot of damage."

To many residents on the coastline, the storm proved disastrous. Marion Pearson, who vacations in Duxbury from Minneapolis, said of the waves and rocks that covered the lawns: "The sprays were coming over the wall. All of these rocks came from the ocean."

Pointing at the lawn of a neighbor on Ocean Road, Helen Prizio observed, "he had the greenest lawn. Now it's covered in rocks!"

Dullea, a former military photographer, has lived in Duxbury for 20 years and said that this storm "finishes behind the No Name storm of 1992 in which we lost ten houses." Dullea's basement was flooded with water entering from a trap door in the chimney.

Dullea said he was lucky to have avoided substantial property damage. He, like all the residents of the area, is required to have flood insurance.

"Fortunately we get warnings, so we know what to do with property. Except for the furnace, we had no heat for two days."

"You couldn't ask for a better place to live, despite the storms," Dullea said of the town. "People who live elsewhere deal with other problems. Everywhere you go you have to deal with wraths. You just have to figure out which one."

John Mann, another resident also admired the response of the town, calling it "marvelous."

The back deck of Robert Dodds' house on Ocean Rd. suffered extensive damage.

"The water came in through the shutter and hit the glass," Dodds said. "Fortunately no rocks came up. We only had water going through the door."

Dodds has lived on Ocean Road since 2000 and explained that the previous owner of his house did not have shutters and suffered greater damage to his house.

"Those shutters were definitely worth it," Dodds said. "They cost about \$10,000 to put in, but they were worth every cent."

Responding for the town was the Duxbury fire department.

"We put a truck in there the first night," said Deputy Chris West. "The next night it got bad. Water came but it didn't affect the area much, fortunately. That night people called for help and the waves started pounding on shore, but we had no apparatus. We received a call that the waves had broken through a house, so we rushed over there. You never know what you will find. There were people who wanted to be evacuated."

Evacuated residents were sent to the senior center that was opened to shelter residents during the storm. Most stayed for no more than two days.

"In one house the basement door blew, so there was a significant amount of flooding," said Deputy West. "Other than that it wasn't that bad. The power never went out and there were no injuries. We just opened the shelter up."

Most residents have become accustomed to flooding and living near a shore.

"Unfortunately, this is common here," Deputy West said. "The houses are designed for that. I am glad, though, that people wanted to evacuate. It is the people who have lived here a long time that you have to watch out for."

The Duxbury Beach Reservation has begun removing debris from the front beach and clearing the back road.

Meanwhile, the Duxbury shoreline has begun to dry and the evacuated residents have returned home.

"It wasn't that bad after all that," said Deputy West.

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STORMS

A street off Ocean Road affected by the flooding that raged through the area on the week of April 15.

Photo by Josh Cutler

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